## Congressman Baird Responds to President's State of the Union Address (January 23, 2007)

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Brian Baird (WA-03) today released the following statement calling the Presidenti  $\frac{1}{2}$ s State of the Union Address  $\frac{1}{2}$ too little, too late, and too much of what got our country into this position to begin with  $\frac{1}{2}$ 

�With America standing in decline, unemployment rising, the stock market falling, gas prices soaring, dangerous military conflicts ongoing, global warming and other challenges facing the world, our citizens are looking to the President and the Congress for real solutions, not rhetoric.

�Tonight the President had a historic, and his last real opportunity to offer those solutions. In large part, I am afraid he has not met that standard. This is part of a long legacy over the past eight years that has time and time again been driven by a failure to make good decisions and seize positive opportunities and, instead, a recurrent pattern of making bad decisions and taking misguided actions.

تزير Our economic woes today are in large part driven by rising energy prices and irresponsible financial practices.

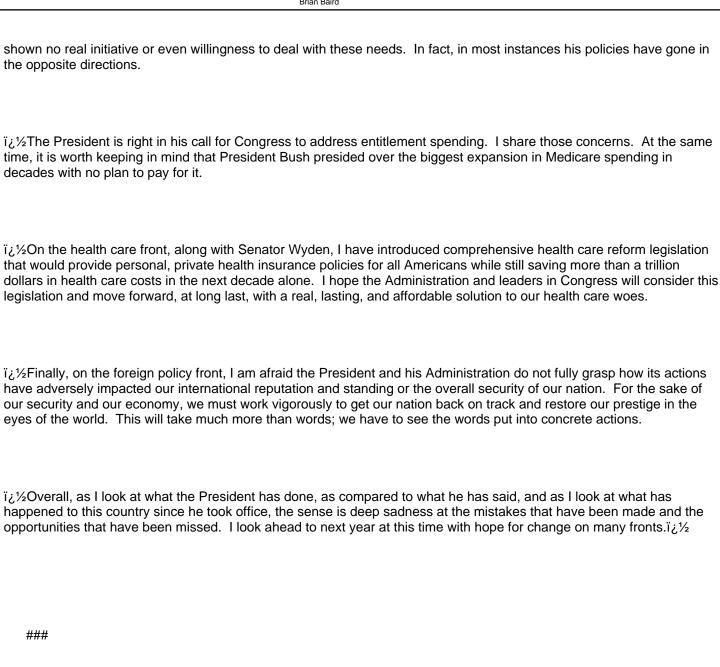
�Rather than a stimulus package that consists largely of giving money away with no plan to pay for it, what we need is a plan that is practical, permanent, paid for and emphasizes personal responsibility. Energy and infrastructure investments meet that standard. Short-term handouts that will be borrowed from foreign nations, spent to buy foreign-made goods and paid for by our children are not a lasting solution.

�For my part, I would have hoped the President would have called on our nation to restore economic health and put people to work again by investing in transportation infrastructure and energy conservation. For example, the President should have shown bold leadership by calling on all Americans to cut their energy consumption and carbon generation by 20% in 20 weeks. That would immediately put money into people�s pockets through savings on energy and it would have promptly cut energy prices. It would also have shown the world that we are truly serious and willing to take the lead on stopping climate change and ocean acidification.

What the President is proposing for both energy and the stimulus is too little, too late, and too much of what got us here to begin with.

�On the education front, the President continues to praise his No Child Left Behind initiative, but he has still not insisted on funding the program as promised in the initial proposal and he said virtually nothing about correcting the most glaring flaws in the program, flaws that anyone who has visited schools, spoken with administrators or met with students and parents would see. We need to correct how yearly assessments deal with special needs and multilingual students, we need to provide support to help teachers meet new qualification standards, we need to allow for computerized adaptive testing, and we should dramatically expand our support for career and technical education. The President has

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